The Unitarian Calendar

LAST WORDS OF "EBEN HOLDEN"

"I aint afraid,
'Shamed o'nuthin' I ever done.
Alwuss kept my tugs tight,
Never swore 'less 'twas nec'sary,
Never ketched a fish bigger'n 'twas,
Er lied'n a hoss trade,
Er shed a tear I didn't hev to,
Never cheated anybody but Eben Holden.
Goin' off somewhere, Bill; dunno the way nuther,
Dunno if it's east or west er north er south,
Er road er trail;
But I aint afraid."

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OUR NATIONAL SOCIETIES

With headquarters in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Local offices at 104 East 20th Street, New York City; 175 Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill., and Cor. Franklin and Geary Streets. San Francisco, Cal.

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Founded in 1825.

The chief missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes books, tracts, and devotional work.

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The Unitarian Calendar

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THE PERSISTENT HOPE

BY REV. CHARLES F. DOLE, D. D.

First Congregational Society (Unitarian) Jamaica Plain, Mass.

We cannot lead the life of religion in the terms of conscience and duty, of trust and good will, with all our heart and mind and strength, and not live a life of hope. By some profound relationship of the vital and spiritual elements, more real than the iron and nitrogen that enter into the making of our bodies, faith and love and hope are made to go together in a sort of inseparable combination. They are the conditions of the fullest health of body, mind and spirit. At our highest and best we tend to hope, and when hope fades life droops.

Moreover, though it may not seem so at first, this is an infinite hope. It cannot be satisfied with perishable and childish goods. It transcends finite limits. Wherever death stands, this marvelous hope always appears in the immortal sunshine beyond. It is as if the Master of Life forever forbids anyone to interpret the world into the terms of negation. Do you want fullness of life? Then go with the motion of life, and let yourself hope to the uttermost, as you trust and love to the uttermost. This is the practical way in which you make proof of the fact that the great life values belong together. You cannot leave one of them out and be quite your whole self at your best working power. Surely the mind that doubts and denies is not so strong as the mind that believes and hopes.

We have said Hope, and an Infinite Hope—a hope that means life—but we have not said and cannot say that which we hope for. That this must be so is of the nature of hope. It is an attitude, not a science, and this is all that is essential for man. Perhaps this is all that could be well for him. As it is not good for the child to be living the man's life in anticipation, much less to know what his own future life will be, but rather to live the child's life with all his might, and be the best possible child; and as the ground of his hope of becoming the best possible man lies in this simple attitude, so we say of this present life: it is full of inexhaustible possibilities, crowded with the opportunity of love and noble deeds. Let it go on day by day, translating all manner of experiences into richness and unity. Let it gather daily new assurance of the presence and reality of the life of God; let it thus taste the quality of the eternal life. Let each man live this present life with all his might; let him take, as his natural birthright, the attitude of one who lives in hope, who looks upward and refreshes his soul with the sight of the sky; let him leave the rest to the Master of Life, in whose good faith he trusts all. And so each year let him sing, as he presses toward the mystery of the everlasting light, "The best is yet to be."

In proportion as religious sects exalt feeling above intellect, and believe themselves to be guided by direct inspiration rather than by a spontaneous exertion of their faculties—that is, in proportion as they are removed from rationalism—their sense of truthfulness is misty and confused.

—*George Eliot.*

The best work any man can do is to nourish the lives of those less fortunate than himself. The highest justification of any calling is its opportunities, direct or indirect, for rescuing those who are down, strengthening the weak, encouraging the disheartened, giving light to those that sit in darkness. The life and death of Jesus continue to be of supreme worth because they take this direction. The ultimate demand made upon him by the inner voice which every sincere seeker of the light sooner or later recognizes as the ultimate Word of God for him, was that he give his life as an example to all men of every time of the precious and priceless worth of a soul's intimate and conscious harmony with God. Aside from this, his example tells us, nothing matters much. Having this, we have all; without this, the richest is poor, indeed. The gift of that life in that way has answered its purpose. It has probably freed more souls from the bondage of every form of sin and wickedness than any other one force. Such is the demand, let it be said in all humility, that the compelling inner voice makes upon everyone. They who make money and they who spend it, they who work and they who play, keep their spirits sweet, their hearts young, their hope, faith and good-will unabated only in so far as their motive is "the ransom of many,"—to give that others may receive, to be weak that they may be strong, to die that these may live. This is the one invincible motive. Who holds it, holds all. He is in league with eternity. For him all things are possible. Such have been the savors of the past; such are the saviors this time needs.

Rev. W. E. Skerrye.

By faithfulness faith is earned.—*Thoreau.*

ORGANIZED RELIGION

BY REV. FREDERIC W. SMITH

Of the Unitarian Society, Peterboro, N. H.

We may rest assured that religion will never fade out of human hearts,—"The will of men did not beget it, neither shall oblivion put it to sleep." The church owes its origin and continued existence to the persistency of man's spiritual needs, and will always be a necessity; for religion is social as well as individual. There can possibly be no substitute for the church that is fully alive to its opportunities,—that makes religion not one of its specialties, but its One Specialty.

History teaches that "One with God is a majority;" that a man on the side of truth, love and justice outvalues a multitude of mercenary individuals. The work of organized religion is to inspire and uplift the lives of the multitude, so that there may be an enlarged "majority;" it is to do for civilization what the individual, however good, brave and strong, can never accomplish single-handed and alone.

Unorganized goodness is like diffused light; focus the light and it burns; unite the forces that make for righteousness and they are irresistible. "The children of light" are not as wise as "the friends of Mammon," because they are less united and so are too often less effective.

As believers in a rational faith let us seek to arouse the latent goodness in human hearts and stand together and work together, as never before, for God, Truth and Humanity.

The sunbeams are as numerous as the stars, and there are yet "in Israel seven thousand" who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

You have not fulfilled every duty unless you have fulfilled that of being pleasant.

—*Charles Buxton.*

THE TEACHING OF EASTER

Everybody knows that Easter is, as a festival, universal in time and place. Whether it be the return of the sun at the vernal equinox, or whether the emphatic thought be the rising from the tomb of a human spirit, the essential idea is the renewal of life, the persistence of the vital force. And when we ask what Easter can do for us, and ought to do for us, our answer must be the same that has been given to the world from the start. It is the same answer given to the ancient worshipper on the steppes of Thibet, in the valley of the Nile, on the altars of Montezuma, to the Druids in the prehistoric groves of Britain, to the skalds of Iceland, to the Saxons, and to the Christians, namely: Life is triumphant, it does not perish, it persists, it renews itself, it conquers disease, it seeks and finds new expressions, and there is no tomb with a stone so large against its door that it cannot push it away and find an entrance into the light and glory of another sphere. That is the great, universal teaching of Easter.

If there are those who do not believe in this perpetual renewal of life we may suspect it is because they do not appreciate the nature and power of life. We do not sufficiently realize what an elemental and unconquerable force it is. That is, our ideas about life are not worthy of it. But when we can see it, or when we can understand it as it found expression in Jesus, then we begin to realize its value. It is because we fail to exhibit it with sufficient power and grandeur that we get to thinking that it can somehow be destroyed. But let it be expressed in sufficiently exalted terms, and then the cessation of it appears impossible. No wonder the early Christians obtained a new grip upon the thought of immortality. No wonder they came to believe in the renewal or resur-

rection of life after having seen a man who really lived and represented what life was capable of. Why, after having come in contact with such a soul as Jesus, it would have seemed like a blemish and a blot on the face of nature to have thought of it as less than immortal!

Amid all uncertainties one thing is sure: noisy, strenuous self-assertion has no place in Jesus's conception of well-rounded manhood and womanhood. It is utterly foreign to the spirit and principles of this master of the art of living. He condemned it by look and word and act. He rebuked his disciples for showing it. Anything like sensationalism or display filled him with abhorrence. It was to him a sign of inner disquietude. It meant a spirit at war with its own best nature and out of harmony with God. It was evidence of a life that had not found the secret of abiding peace and calm contentment. It was the manifestation of a troubled spirit and an uneasy conscience. It showed conclusively that the soul found no joy and power in the infinite companionship. It was a revelation of the tragedy of spiritual poverty.

—*Rev. W. S. Jones.*

Were we quite sure
To find the peerless friend who left us lonely,
Or there, by some celestial stream as pure,
To gaze in eyes that here were lovelit only,
This weary mortal coil—were we quite sure—
Who would endure?

—*Edmund C. Stedman.*

UNITARIAN HYMN

(*Easter*)

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
O Lord of Life, where'er they be,
Safe in thine own eternity,
Our dead are living unto thee.
Alleluia!

All souls are thine, and, here or there,
They rest within thy sheltering care;
One providence alike they share.
Alleluia!

Thy word is true, thy ways are just;
Above the requiem, "Dust to dust,"
Shall rise our psalm of grateful trust.
Alleluia!

O happy they in God who rest,
No more by fear and doubt oppressed;
Living or dying they are blest.
Alleluia! Amen.

—*Frederick L. Hosmer.*

Against the threats
Of malice or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call chance, this I hold firm:
Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt;
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthralled:
Yea, even that which Mischief meant most harm
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory;
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness.

—*Milton.*

Whenever a captious, disparaging, self-accusing article appears in one of our Unitarian publications, it is forthwith clipped into nearly all the sectarian papers in the country, and the secular press copies and comments upon it with great alacrity. It matters not that in the same issue there may be a reply to it which completely shows that it is essentially untrue and unjust. The reply is invariably overlooked, and our own criticisms of ourselves are interpreted as Unitarian confessions of denominational weakness and self-distrust. We are used to this sort of thing in New England, because we are well established here and no one takes such lampoons seriously. We take them as we take the influenza, and regard it as an indication of health. But the people to whom our brave and lonely preachers in the South and West try to minister do not understand. They receive newspaper clippings, they are confronted by anxious inquirers, they are derided by their opponents, and they are troubled both in body and soul in the attempt to explain such deprecatory effusions away and convince their people that Unitarianism is sound, and that organized Unitarianism is still worthy of their support. In justice to our own unique position among the Christian churches of the country we ought to cultivate the habit of speaking well of ourselves and of entertaining a wholesome optimism. The truth is more often positive and life-giving than it is negative and discouraging, and, if we have personal grievances, it is seldom necessary to visit them upon the whole denomination. At all events, no one could become acquainted with the difficulties, the perplexing problems and heavy burdens that our ministers already have to deal with at distant posts and not hesitate before rushing into print with dubious and disparaging reflections upon our

honest efforts. This does not involve the question of an open court: it is simply a question of good sense. When matters of enough consequence arise to demand an open court, that court should, of course, be always at hand.

Think of a man priding himself on this kind of wealth, as if it greatly enriched him. As if one struggling in mid-ocean with a bag of gold on his back should gasp out, "I am worth a hundred thousand dollars." —*Thoreau.*

Man cannot be God's outlaw if he would;
Nor so abscond him in the caves of sense
But nature shall still search some crevice out
With messages of splendor from that source
Which, soar he, dive he, baffles still and lures.

Everything true and high sets itself to music. All men and women who influence mankind are idealists. The sentiments harmonize and become melodious. The New Testament itself is a poem; so are the utterances of Jesus.

—*A. Bronson Alcott.*

Somehow I rest in God as a safe guide and friend, never to be lost or alienated. All is planned by him, all is just as he intended, and so I rest resigned in him. —*Mary A. Livermore.*

Happy is he to whom the spirit says distinctly, According to your measure of power you have been true to your ideal. —*W. H. Channing.*

PEACE

BY REV. R. F. JOHONNOT,
Of Unity Church, Oak Park, Ill.

Jesus, in taking leave of his disciples, said to them, "Peace I give unto you; my peace I leave with you," but it was not a peace of inactivity. Rather did he send them out to hard labor; for them he prophesied hardship, persecution, death. The peace that Jesus attained, the peace he set before his disciples, was a peace that sprang from two sources; first, the thought that he was doing the will of God; the other, that God's strength would be sufficient for him. This complete trust in God, the sense that all was well, under his guidance, come what might, suffering or death, was the source of the peace of Jesus. So he could say to men, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Not the rest of inactivity, but the sense of peace, of completeness, of fullness and joy in life. The truest, highest peace is ever found not in idleness, not in mere rest, but in the sense of completeness of life. That fullness is found only as we learn to stay our hearts on God and trust him absolutely for all the issues of life. When we so stay our hearts on God, then we find the perfect peace spoken of by the old prophet, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." And that peace is compatible with much of struggle and hardship. Having it, we may continue to struggle, as life makes struggle necessary, but it will be with a sense of joy in the struggle, because we work as servants of God, because we fight as those who have the joy of certain victory, of victory over the world without and the evil within.

Against stupidity the gods themselves struggle in vain. —*Schiller.*

What were the God who sat outside to scan
The spheres that 'neath his finger circling ran?
God dwells within, and moves the world and moulds,
Himself and Nature in one form enfolds.

—*Goethe.*

REV. ROBERT F. LEAVENS,

First Parish Unitarian Church, Fitchburg, Mass.

Freedom is always an opportunity, and it is always a risk. Ours is the glorious privilege of strengthening the church of God on earth, of laboring together for righteousness on earth in the name of God, of learning the truth of God with no man to hinder, of worshipping God in the way that seems best to us, the privilege of spiritual growth, full and free, of imbibing the life of God at first hand. Ours also is the risk and the danger of leaving God's church weaker than we found it, of becoming faint-hearted in the doing of good for want of the inspiration of religion, of forsaking the truth, of forgetting to pray, of shrivelling spiritually, and of losing the way to the Most High.

This is the choice which every one must make: liberty and growth, or license and decay; forward or backward, up or down,—there is no half way, hot or cold, one thing or the other; lukewarm is cold; "he that is not for us is against us." This is the option which lies before each free-born man and woman of this generation; the full privileges and benefits of religion are his, gratis; a responsibility for the whole progress of religion is his also.

THE CALL OF THE MODERN AGE

By Rev. Cicero A. Henderson

Of the First Unitarian Society, Wilmington, Del.

The call of the modern age is for dedicated will. Each new age makes a double attack: First it attacks the will, to destroy it, and then, failing in that, to pervert it. And each new age makes a double challenge: First it challenges the will, by the very wealth of the opportunity it provides, to strengthen itself; and then it challenges it by the even greater wealth of opportunity it offers, to dedicate itself. Before each new age the will stands in ever more critical case. More than ever before there is power to destroy it. More than ever before there is wealth to reward it.

The call of the age is in principle precisely the call of Jesus' age. Before him were men who were confused and distraught, changing with each changing voice. To them he said: You need first of all strength of will, power of attention, ability to hold on until you can act; to try these things out, to think them through, to test them in the fires of experiencee, is your first necessity. And then you need freedom,—freedom from the motive of pride and singularity, from the motive of fear, and from every motive under the sun, but the motive of humility. Thoroughness and lowliness will settle your case; resolution and subjection will do it. He that willeth, and willeth until he does, willing only to do the will of God, shall know of the doctrine, shall have a practical faith sufficient for life and death.

Embryos we msut be till we burst the shell,
Yon ambient azure shell, and spring to life.

—*Young.*

THE CHURCH IS YOUR AFFAIR

BY REV. KENNETH E. EVANS.

Of the First Unitarian Society, Chicopee, Mass.

A church is not a building and a minister, though some seem to think so; nor some pews plus a choir and a subscription list. A sign-board on the lawn may remind the wayfarer of its existence, but its best advertisements are consecrated men and women. You wish that strangers would come into your services,—why not be there to relieve their loneliness? That your membership would grow,—then make it worth while. Risk your carpets a bit in the service of the community. Give back in philanthropy what you escape in taxation. Let your church become renowned not merely for its dances and its suppers, but as an uplifting agency, a centre of spiritual life and social redemption. "Let it," do I say? Don't worship or work by proxy. Take a hand yourself. Feel personally responsible. Better egotism than indifference,—yea, if need be, a church quarrel than a church funeral—minus the burial service.

A man's life is not truly measured by the number of his years, but by the value of his work. Not length of days, but loftiness of deeds, is the standard of measurement. You may wish for a long life, but remember that it will be of no use to you or to anyone unless you make it all the time a life of well-doing. In short lives there have been great achievements and grand examples. The age of Methusaleh is a poor thing compared with the work of Jesus. Let all action be straight and strong and true. Better have your life four-square than four-score. —*A. Irvine Innes.*

NOTES

Every Unitarian should make a note of the three important gatherings of the coming months: April 26-28, the meeting of the National Federation of Religious Liberals in New York City; May 22-26, the Anniversary Week Meetings in Boston and the Annual Meetings of all the Societies; Oct. 23-25, the National Conference in Washington.

Among the meetings of the district conferences there should be noted the meetings of the Pacific Coast Conference at San Diego, Cal., April 4-6; the meeting of the Western Conference at Indianapolis, Ind., May 16-18.

The beautiful new church of the Society in San Diego, Cal., will be dedicated on April 4th, in connection with the meeting of the Pacific Coast Conference.

Among the installations last month have been those of Rev. Thomas S. Robjent at Washington Heights, N. Y., on March 7; Rev. John H. Applebee at Syracuse, N. Y., on March 8; Rev. Charles A. Hodges at Troy, N. Y., on March 9; Rev. John H. Lathrop at Brooklyn, N. Y., on March 16; and Rev. Howard C. Ives at Summit, N. J., on March 26.

Rev. A. M. Rihbany of Toledo, Ohio, has received a call to the Church of the Disciples in Boston. Rev. Charles Graves is to move this month from Passaic, N. J., to the charge of the church in Albany, N. Y. Among the noteworthy resignations which are to take effect in the coming summer are those of Mr. Sunderland of Hartford, Conn., and Mr. Coleman of Jacksonville, Fla.

Rev. Henry Wilder Foote, the Secretary of the Department of Education of the American Unitarian Association, is now making a prolonged journey, visiting all the churches on the Pacific coast. The Secretary of the Association, Mr. Wilson, has just returned from a visit to the Southern churches. The Secretary of the Western Conference, Mr. Smith, has visited the churches in Michigan and in Southern Minnesota. The Financial Secretary, in company with Rev. U. G. B. Pierce of Washington, a director of the Association, has been holding a series of inspiring week-night meetings in a number of the churches in Massachusetts.

An agreement has been entered into between the Directors of the American Unitarian Association and the Trustees of All Souls' Church, Washington, D. C., which looks to the building next year of a new, enlarged, and handsome church to represent our cause in the national capital. This new building is sorely needed to accommodate the large number of people who attend All Souls' Church and to provide equipment for the many activities of the Society.

The programme of the meeting of the National Federation of Religious Liberals in New York, April 26-28, has been completed. The meetings are to be held successively in the Church of the Divine Paternity (Universalist), the Cooper Union, and the Meeting House of the Society of Friends at Stuyvesant Square. The speakers are to be the leading ministers and laymen representing the liberal wings of many denominations. Among them may be noted the following:

Henry W. Wilbur, General Secretary, Friends' General Conference, Philadelphia.

Rev. J. Howard Mellish, rector Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn.

Rev. Francis Brown, D. D., president Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Rev. S. A. Eliot, D. D., president American Unitarian Association, Boston.

Rabbi Joseph Silverman, Temple Emanu-El, New York.

Rev. J. Clarence Lee, D. D., Universalist pastor, Philadelphia.

Miss Vida Scudder, professor at Wellesley College.

Rev. Charles Stelze, Secretary Department of Church and Labor of the Presbyterian Church, New York.

Henry Frayne, General Organizer of the American Federation of Labor, New York.

Rev. Thomas R. Slicer, pastor All Souls' Unitarian Church, New York.

Henry L. Stimson, late candidate for Governor of New York.

Dean Henry Wade Rogers, Law School of Yale University.

Hon. Curtis Guild, Jr., ex-Governor of Massachusetts.

Edwin D. Mead, Peace Foundation, Boston.

Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman, McVicker Professor of Political Economy, Columbia University and president Society of Ethical Culture.

Oswald Garrison Villard, editor New York *Evening Post.*

Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf, Philadelphia.

Rev. Gilbert Reid, director International Institute of China.

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